WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARIES

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

THE HUNTINGTON MEETING IN REVIEW

General Sessions

The Thirty-Fourth Annual Conference of the West Virginia Library Association opened with the annual dinner, held in the Fireside Room at the Frederick Hotel, Huntington, on Friday evening, October 15. Approximately 60 persons attended.

The highlight of the dinner, not overlooking the food and the delightful asides by Pauline Osborne, was the address by Dr. Stewart H. Smith, President of Marshall College. His subject was "Making Libraries More Functional." His eight fundamental points were: Adequate housing and equipment: Adequate resources for study and research; A professionally trained staff with each member an "educator;" Imagination in making surroundings attractive; Integration of the library with educational policies and practices; Integration of the administration and faculty toward use and strengthening of library resources in stimulating research and learning; Adequate finances; A definite program of objectives for expansion and improvement.

Following President Smith's address, Dr. J. F. Marsh, toastmaster, introduced representatives from various civic organizations who discussed ways in which the public library could improve its service to the community. Participating were Mr. Frank Smith, international representative of the American Federation of Labor; Mrs. W. S. Hathaway, president of the Huntington chapter of the American Association of University Women; Miss Mae Baker, representing the Huntington Altrusa Club; and, Mr. H. C. Ohlson, from the Huntington Kiwanis Club.

The Saturday morning meeting began with the reading of the minutes, followed by the treasurer's report. The latter showed a balance of $102.89. Mr. E. M. Grieder (pinch-hitting for the chairman, Miss Eleanor Hamilton), gave a report of the Constitution Committee. The constitution in its revised form is to be published in later issues of W. Va. Libraries.

Following a report by Miss Dora Ruth Parks on the Legislative Institute preceding the A. L. A. at Atlantic City, there was the report of the nominating committee. Our officers for 1948-49 will be Mr. Charles Butler, president; Mr. Charles Knapp, vice-president; Miss Faith Kessel, secretary; Mrs. Vivian Boughter, treasurer.

Mr. Grieder reported on W. Va. Libraries. He estimated one hundred and twenty dollars annually as the amount needed to continue its publication.

The meeting closed with an account of the A. L. A. Convention by Miss Virginia Ebeling.

The Saturday afternoon meeting featured a panel discussion on the National Library Plan. Mrs. Oliver Shurtleff, chairman, was ably assisted by Mrs. O. G. Wilson, Miss Dora Ruth Parks, Mr. Charles E. Butler, Miss Ethel Green, and Miss Katherine C. Dwyre.

(Continued on page 5)

THE RITZ COLLECTION AT K. C. P. L.

Mr. Charles Butler, Librarian

The Kanawha County Public Library recently purchased the collection of books made by the late Harold A. Ritz of Charleston, thereby bringing the library's book stock to slightly more than 100,000 volumes. The Ritz Collection, numbering approximately 8,000 volumes, was offered for sale to dealers, but when it became apparent that the bids received on it represented only a fraction of its worth, the board of directors authorized its purchase by the library.

The collection comprises regular trade editions of works on history, biography, and travel; sets of standard authors in various fields; and special and limited editions. Especially rich in American history, the collection includes approximately 150 titles on Lincoln, many of them out of print; the Jesuit Relations, the complete Rivers of America, and some very good material on Virginia and West Virginia, such as Burk's four-volume History of Virginia, and a first edition (1705) of Beverley's History and Present State of Virginia. Also included are an almost complete run of the publications of the Limited Editions Club, as well as examples of the publications of the Nonesuch Press.

While the rare and special items will enrich the library's collections considerably, the Ritz Collection was purchased chiefly because of the large number of standard works in it. Many out-of-print titles, long sought for as replacements, will be once more available in the library's collection, and numerous titles will be added as new.

With the addition of the Ritz Collection, Kanawha County Public Library's book holdings will now be inventoried at slightly over 100,000 volumes. That is still only about half a book per capita, but makes the K. C. P. L. the second largest library in the state, with barely forty years of history behind it.

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AMONG OUR LIBRARIANS

Miss Helois Dye, Director
Elementary Libraries, Wood County

Recently there appeared in one of the Parkersburg newspapers an article concerning the pupil activities in the library of Parkersburg High School. It was interesting to all the pupils and parents of Wood County because Parkersburg High School students are library conscious.

This story would have been interesting to our readers as well, for the central figure was Miss Ida M. Peters, a leader in school library affairs in West Virginia for many years.

Miss Peters graduated from the Chautauqua Library School in New York. Following graduation, she came to the Carnegie Public Library in Parkersburg as the assistant to Miss Anna Taylor. While here, her work was largely in the Children's and High School departments.

When the new high school was built in 1917, Miss Peters was chosen as head of the library staff and she has remained ever since to make Parkersburg High School Library one of the outstanding libraries in this section of the country.

Miss Peters has given unselfishly of her time and energies to place school libraries on a firm footing in West Virginia. She served as chairman of the School Libraries Section of the S. E. A. for several years.

After doing some graduate work at Columbia Library School, she returned to add to her work by becoming Director of Libraries for Wood County. When those duties became multiplied, the elementary work was taken over by another person and Miss Peters is now Librarian of Parkersburg High School and Director of Secondary Libraries for Wood County.

TURNS WITH THE BOOKMOBILE IN MONROE COUNTY

Doris Wood
Field Worker, W. Va. Library Commission

Since the first of December "Pat", the Library Commission bookmobile, has been traveling regularly over the mountains of Monroe County. Everywhere school children and teachers have offered an enthusiastic welcome to "Pat" and the "library lady" and her books. Adults, slower to adopt things new and different, are gradually beginning to accept and enjoy us.

Monroe County is an ideal spot for this sort of experiment; its people are friendly, hospitable, rather well-read and well-educated. One of the most interesting sections is that little piece of the county and state which lies on the other side of those mountains which everywhere else form the state border. This little portion of the county, Virginia by position, is isolated from everything. To reach it, the bookmobile must cross the mountains into Virginia and, for many miles up the valley, follow a road made from the bed of an old railroad. The enthusiastic welcome, the village interest in the bookmobile and its contents, make the trip well worth while. On our last visit, Mr. Hale, the postmaster, sought vainly for words to express his deep appreciation of the bookmobile. After several false starts, he proclaimed, "I tell you, I'm tickled pink with this service." That sentiment, if not its expression, is shared by the whole community.

Another bright spot in the county is the Rowan Home. The superintendent is Dr. Hancock. Few of his charges are able physically to avail themselves of the service, but those who want to read are encouraged to do so. At the end of each of my visits, Dr. Hancock says, "And for how many books am I responsible this time?" It is impossible to spend even a little while at the Home without a growing thankfulness for health and strength, and a recognition of the task that is undertaken there.

One day, as "Pat" sat at a sunny spot at the side of the road for a little mid-day refueling, a rural mail carrier from Greenbrier County passed by and stopped. "Why" he enquired, "does Monroe County have this and not Greenbrier?" When I explained that Monroe County had requested the bookmobile, he said thoughtfully, "We'll have to do something about this thing." And that is the way we want people to feel -- that they are missing something until they have library service.

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BOOKS ON THE CEILING

A ceiling projector and 45 books were presented on November 23 to the Ohio County Public Library by the Lions Club of Wheeling. The books represent all types and tastes for all ages--picture books, novels, the Bible, and travel stories. These projected books will be loaned to people unable to hold a book or turn the pages. The Lions Club will perform all the service required, such as delivering the machine, demonstrating its use, and returning books and projector to the library.

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A WORD TO THE WISE

This is your last issue of West Virginia Libraries unless you have paid your dues for 1948/49. Send your $2.00 to Mrs. Vivian R. Boughter, treasurer, at West Liberty State College, or to Miss Katherine C. Dwyre, membership chairman, at W. V. U.

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Editor . . . . . Betty Meek
Ohio County Public Library,
Wheeling, West Virginia

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EDITORIAL*

Paul Mallon
Washington Columnist

America has forgotten how to spend a quiet evening in a library. Although our facilities for absorbing the background of our own culture are greater than at any time in history--and all freely given, while the movies cost money--fewer people have been taking advantage of these opportunities than ever before.

One librarian has written me a letter asking for a statement to be used in her local library appreciation week drive. I told her it was not enough for librarians to provide the current newspapers, the latest magazines and the best literature, and then sit down in a good clean building and say: "Here we are; you may come to use our facilities." To do this, will leave the libraries empty. Librarians should all join in an active campaign for greater library appreciation. You must let the people know your wares if you are to sell them--even without cost.

Get people interested in a return to reading. We must strengthen ourselves for cultural conflict in a divided world. In reading are the roots of our civilization.

*The editorial is taken from one of Paul Mallon's "News Behind the News" columns which appeared October 9, 1946, in many newspapers. We feel that Mr. Mallon has something to offer in his comments and that they make a fitting substitution for the guest editorial originally planned.

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In this place we work to educate not the next generation but this generation, the people who here and now have to function in the world. In this place we have and will continue to have books and readers not alone from the American scene but from the far places of the earth so that we may develop and prosper in harmony in our own land, and so that all nations may learn to live in peace, one with another, through mutual respect and understanding....In this place the mind is free to roam, free to search...

Louis S. Weiss
The New School

OUR GUEST CONTRIBUTORS

Our thanks to Miss Doris Wood, Miss Helois Dye, and Mr. Charles Butler for their contributions to this issue of West Virginia Libraries.

We express appreciation also to Mrs. Margaret S. Bobbitt, Mrs. Bernice A. Dorsey, Miss Elizabeth Tarver, Mr. Budd Gambee, Mrs. Amy Roberts Vance, and Miss Katherine M. Kraybill for notes on the state meeting.

HUNTINGTON MEETING
(Continued from page 1)

The next speaker, Miss Elizabeth Kennedy, urged librarians to back the A. L. A. 's Four Year Goals, a Program of Library Action for All Citizens.

Dr. A. J. Gibson, State Supervisor of High Schools of the W. Va. Department of Education, gave a most interesting talk on the present status of high school libraries throughout the state. Dr. Gibson stated that more than half of West Virginia high schools were now members of the North Central Association, an indication of adequate library service in those schools, at least. He distributed mimeographed statistics relative to the schools.

Mrs. Madalyn M. Bradford, Huntington Librarian and president of W. V. L. A., presided.

College Library Section

The College Section of W. V. L. A. gathered in the Sun Room of the Frederick for lunch on Saturday. Mr. Hugh Behymer, chairman of the section and Librarian of Bethany College, presided. Each member introduced himself and told what college he represented. Miss Mary E. Wattles, Chief Reference Librarian, W. Va. University, was appointed secretary. Miss Ora Peters, Librarian of Concord College, volunteered to serve as West Virginia membership chairman for the Association of College and Reference Libraries.

An informal discussion of the problems confronting college libraries and librarians was held. Mr. Behymer announced that he is working upon a book dealing with these problems from the standpoint of a small liberal arts college. He is planning to send out a letter to college librarians asking for suggestions. He will continue work on the book at the Library School of the University of London, where he will be studying next year.

Mr. E. M. Grieder, Librarian of W. Va. University, was elected chairman of the section to succeed Mr. Behymer.

After the Luncheon meeting, fourteen of the college librarians continued the discussion. Topics on which they exchanged viewpoints included the use of microcards and the lending of microfilms.

The Commission

Miss Dora Ruth Parks, Executive Secretary of the W. Va. Library Commission, explained what is meant by a demonstration and described how it is functioning in Monroe County.

The Commission furnishes a trained librarian, a bookmobile, and a minimum of 6000 books. The county, of course, must express a desire for a demonstration, a willingness to bear its share of the physical needs, and show zealousness for a definite plan to carry on library service after the demonstration period--from three months to a year--is concluded. Following the demonstration, the Commission will continue its interest by acting in an advisory and supervisory capacity.

Friends of the Library

The annual meeting of W. Va. Friends of the Library was held in the Huntington Public Library. Dr. J. F. Marsh presided.

Election of officers for the ensuing year was the first order of business. They are: Dr. J. F. Marsh, Athens, re-elected president; Mrs. I. D. Humphreys, Ronceverte, vice president; Mrs. A. N. Henson, Hamlin, secretary; and Miss Mildred Fizer, Huntington, treasurer.

Acting upon the suggestion of Mrs. O. G. Wilson, the group decided to have the Executive Committee appoint five members in different parts of the state to secure state memberships. It was requested that Friends of the Library in the counties be asked to contribute five cents from each twenty-five cents dues to the state organization of Friends to promote its objectives.

PROFESSIONALLY SPEAKING

HELP WANTED!

Three new memberships in the American Library Association right now would make the quota for West Virginia. If you join now, you will be listed as a 1948 member in the ALA Handbook and your dues will be paid for the entire year 1949. Last year West Virginia had the largest percentage of new members of any state. Help to keep her on the library map.

If you need an application blank, send a postal to Miss Katherine C. Dwyre, West Virginia University Library, Morgantown.

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The Citizen's Conference on Health, Welfare and Recreational Needs in West Virginia, sponsored by the W. Va. Conference of Social Work, held its annual meeting November 18, 19, and 20 in Wheeling. The library participated with two members of the staff heading committees--the one, Exhibits; the other, chiarman of the committee to meet the V. I. P. A third member of the staff was in the cast for the Conference Follies.

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Mr. E. Hugh Behymer, librarian of Bethany College, expects to spend next year in England, studying at the University of London.

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Last August the Board of Public Works approved a release of $125,000 to West Virginia State College and another of $20,000 to West Virginia Tech, with both amounts to be used for library improvements.

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Mrs. John H. Jones, a member of the Upper Monongahela Valley Association and of the editorial board of West Virginia Libraries, added to her duties the care of twins, a boy and a girl, born in June.

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PERSONNEL: the KEY to LIBRARY PROGRESS

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The Fairmont Public Library had the cooperation of the Junior League during Book Week. Members who volunteered their help read many of the children's books in advance, to enable them to tell the story to an inquiring child. Aid was also given to parents seeking suitable books and magazines.

Editor's note: How was Book Week in your Library? Wasn't there some happening that readdrs of W. Va. Libraries would enjoy? Write and tell us about it--any week.

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Miss Virginia Ebeling, assistant librarian at the Ohio County Public Library, Wheeling, spoke at the West Virginia Historical Society Convention in Charleston in October, on "Library Development in Ohio County."